its high number of Black women war workers. I was curious how Black women's experiences of high wages and ties to the state, and then mass firing after the war shaped the substance of their activism in Milwaukee. Despite this lingering question, Moten's book is well-researched, well-argued, and offers historians interested in intellectual history an excellent framework for writing about African American women whose voices never reached the academy.

Mary-Elizabeth Murphy
Department of History and Philosophy,
Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti (MI), United States
E-mail: mmurph54@emich.edu
doi:10.1017/S0020859024000476

KELLEY, SEAN M. American Slavers. Merchants, Mariners, and the Transatlantic Commerce in Captives, 1644–1865. Yale University Press, New Haven (CT) [etc.], 2023. 479 pp. Ill. Maps. $35.00. (E-book: $35.00.)

That Sean Kelley has written a major history of the United States slave trade, 1645–1866, is a significant achievement. As Kelley argues, though North American capital financed fewer than 2–3 per cent of all transatlantic slaving voyages, one should not understate the legacies of the slave trade for the future United States. *American Slavers* covers the expanse of first British North American and then, from 1783, United States participation in the transatlantic slave trade. (Henceforth this review will use "US" for simplicity.) Kelley focuses on the 1730–1775 years of trade growth, when Newport, Rhode Island, emerged as a principal port from which merchants organized voyages. Legislation banned slave imports from Africa after 1 January 1808; the years 1803–1807 represented the height of US slaving, the five years when Charleston became a major Atlantic slaving port. Though Congress prohibited the traffic in 1808 and made slaving a capital offense in 1820, merchants from the US continued to invest in slaving ventures, usually disembarking captives in Cuba. Importantly, the nation was the key participant in the transatlantic slave trade in the 1850s: most slaving ships were built in ports in New England and Baltimore, and New York became one of the late trade's epicenters.

American Slavers focuses on the pre-1808 period, first following the development of the trade. As documented in www.slavevoyages.org, a few early slaving voyages, small craft from New England, sailed to Upper Guinea, including the Portuguese Cape Verde Islands. In the 1690s, an atypical New York–Madagascar slave trade emerged, closely linked to smuggling and piracy. That trade ended in 1702, and the US slave trade remained small until the 1730s, when the number of voyages rose from about 1–3 per year to 5–15 per year, as Rhode Island ports were established. Boston and New York City's slave trades, outpaced by Rhode Island's, usually totaled a few voyages per year, except for the expansion from New York in the 1750s and 1760s. Similarly well-known: US vessels were small craft, sailed mostly to the Gold Coast

(modern-day Ghana), and traded large quantities of New England rum. US merchants would likely sell the enslaved to agents in the British West Indies before 1792 and to Spanish Cuba from 1792 to 1804. A major change occurred in 1804–1808, when most captives arrived in Charleston and some larger craft plied the Atlantic. Bristol, Rhode Island, and Charleston became key outfitting ports. Unusually, forty-five US slaving vessels sailed to Montevideo or Buenos Aires following pioneering ventures to the Rio de la Plata in the late 1790s.

After surveying 150 years of the US slave trade, Kelley evaluates "Captivity" and "Slave Trading Communities," 1700–1807. Here, *American Slavers* provides more new information. "Captivity" examines how unfortunates became enslaved in Africa and concludes with short sections on the Middle Passage and the Americas. Kelley draws on slave narratives, some collected in the 1760s by missionary C.G.A. Oldendorp in the Danish Virgin Islands. Other studies might devote a chapter to shipboard disease, mortality, and resistance (and there are monographs on revolts and the Middle Passage). Fewer sources, however, document the US slave trade; slaving vessels rarely employed surgeons; and American abolitionists did not demand information about the trade, as they did in England beginning in 1788. "Communities" focuses on Rhode Island slavers and the enslaved. Readers learn about sailors' lives and recruitment. Kelley examines slaving wealth via probates and tax records, stating that the slave trade contributed a "small fraction" of the capital invested in new commercial and industrial enterprises (p. 261). There is novel information about African communities in Newport, traced via cemeteries, though no mention of New York's larger African-born population.

The final two chapters summarize the US slave trade during 1808–1865, the years of illegality. Much is now known, thanks to Leonardo Marques, *The United States and the Transatlantic Slave Trade to the Americas, 1776–1867* (2016), and John Harris, *The Last Slave Ships: New York and the End of the Middle Passage* (2020). About one hundred slavers departed the United States but many more US-built vessels sailed to Cuba, where captains acquired Spanish registration. As is now established, when Spain banned slave trading in 1835, Cuban merchants switched to US-flagged vessels. British diplomatic pressure and the rise of radical republican abolitionists ended the US slave trade. Kelley's novel information about the Antebellum slave trade includes more on the US and Cuba, the rise of ship brokers, and illegal slave trades organized from Upper Guinea. *American Slavers* traces histories of African peoples from the Senegal River to modern-day Liberia, a strength of the study, though Kelley could have examined agent Nathaniel Cutting's journal c. 1790.

Comparing *American Slavers* to Jay Coughtry's *Notorious Triangle: Rhode Island and the African Slave Trade, 1700–1807* (1981) illustrates changes in slave trade scholarship over the past half century. Coughtry researched when scholars knew less about the size and geographical distribution of the North American slave trade. In tracking down all Rhode Island slaving ventures, first in a Ph.D. thesis, Coughtry thoroughly mined merchants' papers in New England archives. *Notorious Triangle* followed voyages from outfit in Rhode Island to Africa and then to the Middle Passage and to slave markets in the Americas. Though Coughtry included much material about the intricacies of trade along the Gold Coast, *American Slavers* devotes significantly more room to the histories of African states. Kelley launches *American Slavers* with

"Robert", a youth from the Sierra Leone region who was kidnapped in 1797, marched to today's Liberian coast, and sold to a Newport captain. Kelley concludes the book by narrating that Robert, in Savannah, Georgia, witnessed the murder of an enslaved domestic worker. Robert eventually gained his freedom and lived in Massachusetts, raised a family, worked as a doctor and attended abolitionist meetings.

Extensive material on Rhode Island and Africa fits Kelley's emphasis on studying what he terms the "going out" trade. By contrast, a vessel "coming in" could be a Liverpool-owned vessel disembarking the enslaved in Virginia. Because it lacks a chapter on slave marketing, as does Coughtry, *American Slavers* sidelines those "Americans" who sold slaves in ports such as Charleston. These agents were "Guinea factors" such as South Carolinian Henry Laurens (1724–1792), who brokered sales for at least seventy slaving voyages in Charleston. A study on some of the "coming in" markets would have spotlighted the expansion of slaving frontiers in Virginia and Maryland, 1700–1765, and revealed that not one Rhode Island slaving vessel disembarked slaves in the Chesapeake during these years. Readers might wonder why New England slaving merchants traded more with Barbados agents. Such an analysis could prompt more extensive discussions on seasonality. *American Slavers* alludes to seasonality in Part One, "Portudal, Senegambia, the Dry Season, 1645", but rarely discusses dry or rainy seasons in the Atlantic world.

A comparison with Coughtry's pioneering work also demonstrates that monographs today lack an historiographical structure and may repackage ideas. Kelley does not formally address major scholarly debates: much significant scholarship is discussed, briefly, in endnotes. The distinction between US slave trade departures (the "going out" trade) and US arrival ports (the "coming in" slave trade) does not perplex scholars as much as Kelley contends. Kelley examines "human capital" and the expertise needed to organize slaving ventures. These ideas, however, echo Coughtry, who concludes that "Rhode Island merchants were quick to learn the basic mechanics of the slave trade" and that the "Newport firms that pioneered Rhode Island's participation in the slave trade experimented briefly with a number of strategies before discovering their own special method in the trade" (*Notorious Triangle*, p. 125). Coughtry examines Rhode Island "connections", "contacts", "business relationships", and "liaisons" (*Notorious Triangle*, pp. 126, 128). To Kelley, these are "networks", though it is unclear how network theories advance scholarship other than visualizing links via graphics (pp. 366–372). *American Slavers* could identify its contribution to scholarship by indicating that knowledge advances incrementally.

Puzzling editorial decisions warrant comment. A vague "this" appears every so often, obscuring meaning. Inconveniently, the book lacks a bibliography. To compensate, readers need a comprehensive index that includes entries on key primary sources, such as logbooks and merchants' accounts. Missing also are entries on dysentery, smallpox, and yellow fever; the Middle Passage; seasonality (or dry/rainy seasons); and shipmates. The index includes resistance, insurrections, and revolts under "Captivity" with vague sub-entries such as "environmental issues", suggesting that the index was machine-generated. There are separate entries for "abolitionist movement" and for "anti-Slavery movement". I would not have chosen some index entries, such as "bulking centers". Would a reader, even an expert reader, look for "Wassa state" in the "W" group? Many slaving vessels were indexed under the first letter of their names. Would a reader look up by name *Iris* or

Joseph? *Clotilda* and *Wanderer*, by contrast, are well-known US slaving vessels that indeed warrant index entries under "C" and "W", respectively.

American Slavers is in many ways an important book about US and African history rather than only the transatlantic slave trade. Readers now can find a mostly comprehensive history of the US slave trade in one readable monograph.

Stephen D. Behrendt
History Programme,
Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington, New Zealand
E-mail: steve.behrendt@vuw.ac.nz
doi:10.1017/S002085902400049X

WALDER. ANDREW G. Civil War in Guangxi. The Cultural Revolution on China's Southern Periphery. Stanford University Press, Stanford (CA) 2023. xvii, 276 pp. Maps. $90.00. (Paper: $30.00.)

In the past two decades, Stanford sociologist Andrew Walder has authored or co-authored close to two dozen peer-reviewed research articles and four monographs on various aspects of the Cultural Revolution and its afterlives. Key themes include the origins of factionalism at various stages of the movement, as well as detailed studies on the scope and nature of political violence. His research has also highlighted the situation in the Chinese countryside, which had rarely been covered in previous research. All of these works are based on the painstaking collection of empirical evidence, careful comparison, and an excellent eye for regional variance. The latest – and maybe final – volume of his research into the Cultural Revolution deals with the brutal factional warfare in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in the late 1960s. No other region in the People's Republic of China (PRC) suffered a similar death toll in relation to population size. While particular gruesome incidents of cannibalism and mass murder have been analysed before, this is the first study to give a comprehensive and statistically reliable account of local factionalism, as well as the different forms and phases of political violence. It is a milestone in the field that clearly demonstrates the party-state's culpability for the killings.

The book extensively relies on a massive set of eighteen archival volumes that contain detailed statistics on crimes, perpetrators, and victims for every single county and city in Guangxi. In a bold move, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leadership under general secretary Hu Yaobang had ousted the local political leadership in the early 1980s, which, due to its own complicity in the atrocities, had tried to stall comprehensive investigations into the dark legacies of the Cultural Revolution. The information was compiled by two special teams mandated by the central party leadership, a fact rarely known by Western audiences. These teams relied on information supplied by close to 100,000 investigators, a staggering number that allowed previous crimes to be addressed in excruciating detail. In 1987, this unique set of materials was internally distributed in 1,000 classified copies by